

METHOD, SYSTEM, AND PROGRAM FOR PROVIDING USER
LOCATION INFORMATION FOR A PERSONAL INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FROM TRANSMITTING DEVICES

5 CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is related to the following co-pending and commonly-assigned patent applications filed on the same date herewith, and which are incorporated incorporated herein by reference in their entirety:

10 “Method, System, and Program for Providing User Location Information with a
Personal Information Management Program”, having attorney docket no.
AUS920000712US1; and

“Method, System, and Program for Mining Data in A Personal Information Manager
Database”, having attorney docket no. AUS920000713US1.

15 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a method, system, and program for providing user location information for a personal information management program from transmitting devices.

20 2. Description of the Related Art

25 Portable computing devices, such as hand held computers, cellular phones, palm devices, etc., have become increasingly popular in recent years. The technology has advanced to such a degree that now people can access the Internet through wireless technology, such as a cellular phone or personal digital assistant (PDA), and review content especially tailored for a small portable device. The term PDA, as used herein, refers to any wireless, portable, and small hand held computer device, such as a palm computer, cellular phone, wearable computers, etc. Some of the most popular mobile applications for such wireless devices have

included personal information managers (PIMs), entertainment programs, financial services, and mobile commerce.

One of the recent technological developments for mobile Internet access is the Wireless Application Protocol (WAP), which allows mobile devices to use data services and access the Internet. WAP provides a client/server architecture. A WAP enabled client, such as a cell phone or palm computer, can use micro browsers which are designed to operate within the small display screen of mobile devices and use less memory than a desktop browser. Content for mobile WAP enabled devices may be written in the Wireless Markup Language (WML), which provides a tagged mark-up language similar to the hypertext markup language (HTML), but designed specifically to function in a small-screen environment. Many content providers are providing WAP pages to enable access to the large base of mobile phone and PDA users.

Notwithstanding, recent developments in wireless computing, such as more advanced PIMs, Internet browsing and e-commerce features, only provide users with a significantly limited version of the programs and functions that are available at a desktop computer. For instance, a desktop PIM or calendar program provides a substantially more robust display presentation and range of program functionality than is available for mobile wireless device PIM applications. The same is true for Internet browsing. Given the substantial advantages of desktop PIM and Internet access programs over those available for mobile devices, most computer users, except the submarket of frequent business travelers, may not be motivated to purchase wireless devices for uses other than as a mobile telephone and limited PIM, e.g., address book, calendar, to do list, etc.

Thus, there is a need in the art for an application that would more fully exploit wireless computing technology to extend the utility beyond that of a portable telephone and limited PIM.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Referring now to the drawings in which like reference numbers represents corresponding parts throughout:

FIG. 1 illustrates a telecommunication environment in which aspects of the invention are implemented;

FIG. 2 illustrates components of a PIM database in accordance with implementations of the present invention;

FIGs. 3a, b, c, d illustrate data structures used in accordance with implementations of the present invention;

FIG. 4 illustrates further details of the telecommunication environment in which aspects of the invention are implemented;

FIGs. 5, 6, and 7 illustrate flowcharts of code logic to gather, process, and use location information in accordance with implementations of the present invention; and

FIGs. 8, 9a, and 9b illustrate examples of a display of user calendar and generated location information in accordance with implementations of the present invention.

FIG. 10 illustrates a data structure including information on proximate users in accordance with implementations of the invention;

FIG. 11 illustrates details of a telecommunication environment in which further aspects of the invention are implemented; and

FIGs. 12 and 13 illustrate logic to gather and utilize information on proximate users in accordance with implementations of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the following description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof, and which illustrate several embodiments of the present invention. It is understood that other embodiments may be utilized and structural and operational changes may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention.

FIG. 1 illustrates a wireless computing environment in which embodiments of the invention are implemented. A wireless device 2, such as a telephony device, e.g., cellular phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), hand held computer, palm computer, etc., communicates with a server 4 via a communication tower 6, gateway server 8, and network 10. The server 4 may comprise one or more server class machines known in the art. The wireless device 2 includes a communication layer 12 which converts digital data into a signal that is transmitted to the communication tower 6 in a manner known in the art. The gateway server 8 converts the signals back into digital data to transmit via network 10 to the server 4. The network 10 may comprise any collection of devices, routers, etc. used to transmit data to a centralized server 4 providing data management for the wireless device 2 operations. The communication tower 6 and communication layer 12 may implement any known wireless transmission technology known in the art, such as 3G, Code-Division Multiple Access (CDMA), Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM), satellite, Bluetooth, etc.**

The wireless device 2 further includes locator technology 14 that provides a current position coordinate of the wireless device 2 in three dimensional space (x, y, z) on the surface of the earth and the time the position coordinate was generated. The locator 14 may comprise a global position satellite (GPS) receiver that is capable of calculating a current position based upon signals sent from satellites in a manner known in the art. Alternatively, the location of the wireless device 2 can be estimated externally from the wireless device by measuring the transmissions from the wireless device 2 using any known location positioning technology in a manner known in the art, such as Enhanced Observed Time Differential (E-OTD), Time Of Arrival (TOA), the CellPoint positioning system, the Ericsson Mobile Positioning System, etc.** In fact the United States Federal Communication Commission (FCC) mandated that cellular phone manufacturers incorporate technology to allow the location of the wireless device 2 to be determined. Any reference to the locator 14 refers to the locator technology used within the wireless device 2 that enables a position determination. For instance, if the locator 14 comprises a GPS receiver, then the locator 14 itself may determine the actual position

[illegible]

The server 4 includes a PIM database 22 maintaining user PIM information and a PIM server 24 for gathering and filtering data from wireless devices 2 for the users of the system.

25 The PIM database 22 may be implemented using any database technology known in the art, e.g., relational database, object oriented database, etc. Although FIG. 1 only shows one

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wireless devices 2, the server 4 and PIM database 22 may maintain data for multiple wireless devices 2 and users.

In the described implementations, the PIM client 20 gathers position coordinates for the PIM server 24. The PIM server 24 then uses the position coordinates to supplement the user
5 calendar records with information on what the user actually did for time periods within a day. The user could then view this enhanced calendar including listings of scheduled appointments as well as information describing the actual location and activities of the user and descriptions thereof. The term "location" and "geographic location" as used herein refer to any location that may be mapped and ascertained. Such location or geographic location may be any location on
10 the surface of the earth or the earth's atmosphere, or outer space, that can be expressed as a position coordinate in space. The term "location" or "geographic location" may refer to a specific position coordinate in space, e.g., an X, Y, Z coordinate, or a boundary or area of coordinates. Additionally, the location may be expressed as a vector. The term "position coordinate" as used herein refers to any of a set of numbers used in specifying the location of a
15 point in space, or any one of a set of variables used in specifying the state or motion of an entity, such as a wireless unit or person, associated with the position coordinate.

The PIM server 24 includes the program logic that responds to data requests from PIM clients 20, accesses the PIM database 22 to perform database operations, and performs other data management operations related to managing the PIM database 22. The PIM server 24
20 may include a database management system (DBMS) known in the art or include an interface to access a DBMS program in a manner known in the art to perform operations with respect to the PIM database 22. The PIM server 24 may implement any database programming techniques for performing operations in the PIM database 22. For instance, the PIM server 24 may implement separate application programs for performing database operations or implement
25 database stored procedures to perform database operations. The PIM client 20 includes those program components that gather coordinate and location information as described herein,

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communicates with the PIM server 24, and renders calendaring information at the wireless device 2.

FIG. 2 illustrates the data components of the PIM database 22 maintained by the server 4. The PIM database 22 includes a plurality of user records 50 for each user of a wireless device 2 participating in the wireless computing environment described herein. Each user record 50 includes one or more user scheduled event records 52, measured position records 54, and location records 56 and 58. From the measured position records 54, the PIM server 24 generates filtered position records 60 that provide information on user geographic location and activity for time periods, such as information for a period of fifteen minutes, twenty minutes, one hour, etc.

FIG. 3a illustrates fields in a user scheduled event record 52, including a date 70, time period 72 indicating a time range of the event, and a scheduled event description 74 providing information on the nature of the scheduled event. Through the client PIM 20 software, a user could use the input mechanism 16 to schedule a calendar event and create a scheduled event record 52. Additionally, the user could enter scheduled events from a desktop computer (not shown) that communicates with the server 4 via a network such as the Internet. The scheduled events may be shown in a calendar rendered on the display 18. Additionally, the scheduled events may be shown in a calendar rendered on another computer capable of accessing the server user records 50 in the server 4, such as a desktop computer communicating with the server 4 over the Internet.

FIG. 3b illustrates fields in a measured positioned record 54 for a user, including a date 80 and time 82 the position was measured, a position coordinate 84 expressed as a unique three dimensional x, y, z geographic coordinate on the surface of the earth, and a location description 86 providing descriptive information on the location. In the described implementations, the PIM client 20 periodically generates a measured position record 54 by obtaining the measured position coordinate (x, y, z) and the current time from the locator 14 (which may, in certain implementation interact with external components to provide the location

and position coordinate). The location description 86 may be obtained locally at the wireless device 2 or determined subsequently by the server 4 as described in the following implementations.

FIG. 3c illustrates the fields maintained in the user defined 56 and public 58 location records. An access level field 90 indicates which users can be allowed to use the location record 56 or 58 to determine information about a location. The public location record 58 has public level access such that the PIM server 24 can consider a public location record 58 for any user in the PIM database 22. A user location record 56 can only be considered for the particular user that defined the location record 58 and any other authorized users in the system, as indicated by the access level 90. A geographic boundary field 92 defines a boundary of a defined region in three dimensional space. A location description field 94 provides a description of the location, which may include text, images, sound, movies, etc. A company maintaining the server 4, such as a telecommunication service provider, can use satellite maps and other information to determine the geographic boundaries in three dimensional space of various buildings and businesses. Business could register their geographic boundaries. Public location records 58 may then be generated for each of these determined geographic boundaries and include a description of the location within the geographic boundary.

The user specified location records 56 are generated by the user to provide information to include with the user's calendar. For instance, the user may obtain from a third party, such as a mapping company or organization, the geographic boundaries of an office or building and provide geographic boundary and location description information to the server 4 to include in a user location record 56. In another implementation, the user can activate a geographic boundary definition mode on the wireless device 2 to record position coordinates of a geographic boundary using the locator 14. In this geographic boundary definition mode, the user may walk or otherwise travel around a geographic area. While moving through the geographic area, the wireless device 2 would determine the x, y, z position coordinates at frequent intervals using the locator 14. The PIM client 20 or PIM server 24 can then use the

determined position coordinates to determine a geographic boundary bounding all of the coordinates generated in the geographic boundary definition mode. This determined geographic boundary would then be included in the geographic boundary field 92 of the eventual user defined location record 56 stored in the user records 50 in the database 22. The user may further use the input mechanism 16 to enter information to include in the location description field 94 and the access level 90. The user access level 90 may specify that the user location record 68 be accessible to the user and other specified users, thereby limiting access of the location record 56 to a user defined group.

FIG. 3d illustrates a filtered position record 60 generated from a range of consecutive position records 54 having a same location description 86. The date range 100 and time range 102 for the generated filtered position record 60 would comprise the first and last dates 80 and times 82 of the consecutive position records 64 having the same location description 86. In this way, a single filtered position record 60 represents the data in multiple consecutive position records 54 having a same location description 106. Alternatively, a filtered position record 60 can consolidate multiple position records 54 that have position coordinates 84 within a predetermined proximity, without consideration of the location description 86. A geographic location field 104 indicates the common geographic location of the position records 60 having the same location description 86, which could include the geographic boundary from a location record 56 or 58 if the location description 86 of the consolidated position records 60 was determined from a location record 56 or 58.

Additionally, if algorithms in the PIM server 24 determine that a range of measured position records 54 define an activity, e.g., driving, walking, flying in an airplane, etc., then a filtered position record 60 would be generated for those position records 54 defining the activity. The date range 100 and time range 102 for the generated filtered position record 60 would comprise the first and last date 80 and time 82 of the consecutive position records 64 defining an activity and the location/activity description 106 field for this filtered position record 60 would include a description of the determined activity.

FIG. 4 illustrates an additional implementation of the telecommunication environment for obtaining geographic boundary information. A location transmitter 110 is maintained in a geographic location or boundary 112, such as an office, building, designated region, etc., and includes a communication layer 114 to transmit data throughout the geographic location 112.

- 5 For larger geographic locations, multiple location transmitters 110 may be deployed to transmit throughout the entire geographic location 112. The location transmitter 110 maintains a geographical boundary 116, defining a region of x, y, z coordinates, and a location description 118 providing descriptive information on the geographic boundary 112. The local transmitter 110 is capable of transmitting the geographic boundary 116 and location description 118
- 10 through the communication layer 114 to any receiving device within the geographic boundary 102. For instance, the communication layers 12 and 114 of the wireless device 2 and location transmitter 110, respectively, may implement Bluetooth technology. In such Bluetooth implementations, the location transmitter 110 may continually transmit packets containing an Inquiry Access Code (IAC) to establish communication with any wireless devices 2 within the
- 15 geographic boundary 112. The wireless device 2 may then respond to establish a connection with the local transmitter 110. Upon establishing the connection, the local transmitter 110 may then transmit the geographic boundary 116 and location description 118 through communication layer 114 to the communication layer 12 of the wireless device 2. Further details of Bluetooth communication technology are described in the publication
- 20 "Bluetooth(TM): Connect Without Cables" by Jennifer Bray and Charles F. Sturman (Copyright 2001, Prentice Hall), which publication is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. In alternative implementations, the communication layers 12 and 114 may utilize wireless communication protocols other than Bluetooth known in the art to perform the communication operations described herein, such as the wireless LAN architecture standard proposed in IEEE
- 25 802.11.

FIGs. 5-7 illustrate logic implemented in the PIM client 20 and server 24 to gather and utilize position information concerning the wireless device 2. FIG. 5 illustrates logic

implemented in the PIM client 20 to gather position information to provide to the PIM server 24 to include within measured position records 54 in the database 22. At block 200, the wireless device 2 establishes communication with a location transmitter 110, using the Bluetooth technology or other wireless technology known in the art. After establishing a connection with the location transmitter 110, the PIM client receives (at block 202) a geographic boundary 116 comprised of X, Y, Z coordinates defining a three dimensional boundary on earth and location information describing the geographic boundary 116.

To provide data to the PIM server 24, the PIM client 20 performs steps 250 through 264 in interval time periods, e.g., every few seconds, minute, etc., to measure the current location and generate measured position records 54. At block 250, the PIM client 20 initiates a location request to the locator 14 or other unit to determine the current position coordinate (x, y, z) of the wireless device 2. Upon receiving (at block 252) the position coordinate from the locator 14, the PIM client 20 determines (at block 254) whether the received position coordinate falls within any predefined geographic boundaries supplied by a location transmitter 110, the PIM server 24, a user defined location record 56, or any other geographical boundary maintained by the PIM client 20. If so, the PIM client 20 generates (at block 256) data for a measured position record 54, including the received position coordinate, the date and time the coordinate was determined, and any location description associated with the predefined geographic boundary including the received position coordinate. The gathered data is then sent (at block 258) to the PIM server 24 to include as a position record 54 in the user records 50.

If (at block 254) the received position coordinate did not fall within any predefined geographic boundary, then the PIM client 20 generates (at block 260) data for a measured position record 54 including the received X, Y, Z position coordinate and the date and time the coordinate was measured. If (at block 262) the user has entered through the input mechanism 16 any location description for the current location through the input mechanism 16, then the PIM client 20 adds (at block 264) the user specified location description to the data for the

measured position record. From block 264 or the no branch of block 262, the PIM client 20 transmits the data for the measured position record 54 to the PIM server 24 to include in the user records 50.

FIG. 5 provides logic implemented in the PIM client 20 to gather the position records for each measured coordinate. FIG. 6 illustrates logic for a filtering algorithm that consolidates and interprets the measured position records 54 and generates filtered position records 60 that provide information on the user's whereabouts and activities for time periods. The filtering algorithms used to generate the filtered position records 60 may be implemented in either the PIM client 20 or PIM server 24. In the event that the PIM client 20 executes the filtering algorithm, then the PIM client 20 would transmit the filtered position records 60 to the PIM server 54 to store in the PIM database 22.

With respect to FIG. 6, control begins at block 300 with the invocation of the filtering algorithm for the user records 50 of a particular user. A loop is performed from blocks 302 to 314 for each measured position record i in the user records 50 that has not yet been subject to filtering to add location description information 86 to the measured position record 64 if such data was not provided by the PIM client 20. If (at block 304) the measured position record i does not include any location description 86 data, then a determination is made (at block 306) as to whether the position coordinate 84 data in record i is within the geographic boundary of any user defined location records 56 of the user being considered. If so, then the location description 94 for the user defined location record 90 is added (at block 308) to the location description 86 data for the measured position record 64. If (at block 306) a geographic boundary was not located in the user defined location records 56, then a determination is made (at block 310) whether the position coordinate 84 data in record i is within the geographic boundary of any public location records 58. If so, then the location description 94 for the public location record 58 is added (at block 312) to the location description 86 data for the measured position record 64. From the yes branch of block 304 (if there is already location

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After the measured position records 64 are supplemented with location information from user defined 56 or public 58 location records, then control proceeds to blocks 316 to generate the filtered position records 60 that are particularly suited for use in a PIM or calendaring program. At block 316, the filter scans from the first user position record 54 to determine ranges of consecutive position records 54 having the same location description 86 spanning a time period exceeding a minimum time period. Thus, the filter is looking for position records indicating that the user was at a same location for a minimum time. The minimum time may be a time period of sufficient length that would be meaningful to display in a PIM interface, such as a calendar or schedule, e.g., 10 minutes, etc. For each determined range of records, a filtered position record 60 is generated (at block 318) having a date 100 and time 102 ranges from the date and time of the first to last position records in the determined range and having a location description 106 that is the common location description 86 found in the position records 54 in the determined range. In this way, a single filter position record 50 is generated that defines a location position that was maintained for a minimum time.

At block 320, activity algorithms may then be applied to those position records not consolidated into filtered position records 58 at block 316 and 318. An activity algorithm would analyze a series of consecutive measured position records and based on a rate of change in distance per unit of time, determine a predefined activity associated with the position records. For instance, a range of consecutive measured position records 54 whose position coordinate 84 (x, y, z) is rapidly changing may indicate that the user is traveling in an automobile or other transportation vehicle. Other rate of changes may indicate other activities, e.g., walking, running, bicycle riding, etc. For each determined range of measured position records 54 that define an activity, a filtered position record 60 is generated (at block 322) having a date 100 and time 102 ranges from the date 80 and time 82 of the first and last measured position records 54 in the range and an activity description field 106 set to the activity determined for

5 implementations, a filtered position record 60 indicates a time period during which a user was at a location, defined by a geographic boundary or a time period during which the user was engaged in an activity involving movement from one location to another.

FIG. 7 illustrates logic implemented in the PIM server 24 to generate calendar information that can be displayed at the wireless device 2 or some other computer in communication with the server 4, such as a desktop computer accessing the server 4 over the Internet. Control begins at block 350 with a request for PIM information for a time interval for a user. In response, the PIM server 24 queries the PIM database 22 for filtered position records 60 (at block 354) and scheduled event records 52 (at block 356) of the user within the specified time interval. The PIM server 24 then generates (at block 358) for each calendar time period, e.g., every half-hour, hour, etc., information on the scheduled event description 74 and the location/activity description 106 (FIGs. 3a, d) in the located scheduled event 52 and filtered position 58 records, respectively, that fall within the calendar time periods that span the specified time interval.

If (at block 360) the viewer program requesting the calendar information for the time period is a WML browser on a small device, e.g., the wireless device 2, then the PIM server 24 generates (at block 362) one or more WML pages including a presentation of the information generated for each calendar time period in the user specified time interval including information on user scheduled events and actual location/activity. Otherwise, if the viewer or

browser requesting the calendar information includes a larger display area, then the PIM server 24 generates (at block 364) one or more HTML pages including the presentation of the generated calendar information. From blocks 362 or 364, control transfers to block 366 to transmit the generated web pages to the browser requesting that page. Alternatively, the PIM server 24 may include the generated calendar information in an Extensible Markup Language (XML) or other file that is sent to the PIM client 20 to render on the local display. Thus, the calendar information presented to the user may include a description of user scheduled events as well as information on the geographical locations the user associated with the wireless device 2 visited during the specified time interval.

FIG. 8 illustrates an example of calendar information for the user specified time period presented in a calendar window 400 rendered on a computer display monitor. As shown, the calendar displays both user scheduled events 402 from the scheduled event records and actual location/activity 404 from the filtered position records for calendar times 406 during the specified time interval. In this way, the user may compare what was scheduled with what actually materialized. Moreover, in implementations where the PIM server 24 updates the user calendar information in real time and generates real time filtered position records, the calendar 400 could display the user's current geographical location. This information could be useful for business associates and others interested in the user's location. Additionally, the actual location/activity 402 may be displayed in an abbreviated format. The user may use an input device to selectively display further details on the actual location/activity. For instance, the user may move a mouse input device over the displayed abbreviation of the actual location/activity or click the displayed abbreviation to cause the display of more detailed information on the actual location/activity in the calendar window 400.

FIGs. 9a, b illustrate how calendar information may be displayed on a display 18 of a wireless device 2 having limited display space. FIG. 9a illustrates a small displayed monthly calendar. Upon user selection through the input mechanism 18 of a particular day, e.g., February 5th, the PIM client 20 displays the view shown in FIG. 9b which provides information

of scheduled events 450 and actual user location/activity 452 for a portion of the calendar times 454 during the user requested time interval. The user can use the input mechanism 18 to scroll downward to view further calendar entries.

5 The described implementations provide a technique for gathering and utilizing user position information for use with a PIM or calendaring program. This position information may be provided to the user and those authorized by the user to track actual activity versus scheduled activity.

Obtaining Location Information from Proximate Users

10 In the above described implementations, location description 86 information to include with the user's measured position records 54 could be obtained from user defined 56 and public 58 location records and from a location transmitter 110. Additionally, location description 86 information and location records may be obtained from the location records or position records 54, 60 of other users that were in proximity to the wireless device 2 when the
15 position coordinate 84 for the record 54 was generated.

To use the location description 86 information of other proximate users to a measured position record 54, the PIM client 20 or server 24 must first determine all those other user wireless devices 2 that are within a predefined proximity, e.g., fifty feet, etc, of the position coordinate 84 in the record 54 to which the location description 86 will be added. In one
20 implementation, the PIM client 20 would gather the identity of other transmitting devices, which may comprise other wireless devices 2 (FIG. 1) and location transmitters 110 (FIG. 4), that are in a predefined proximity to the wireless device 2.

FIG. 10 illustrates a modified measured position record 554 that includes date 580, time 582, position coordinate 584, and location description 586 fields which are similar to the
25 fields 80, 82, 84, and 86, respectively, described with respect to the measured position record 54 shown in FIG. 3b. In addition, measured position record 554 includes a proximate user list field 588 that includes the unique identifier of one or more proximate transmitting devices, e.g.,

other proximate wireless devices 2 and local transmitters 110. There may be a limit on the number of users that are included in the proximate user list field 588 to prevent overloading, such as the case if the user is at a public event or arena surrounded by numerous wireless device 2 users.

5 FIG. 11 illustrates one implementation for exchanging identification information among wireless devices 2a, b, c, including the components of wireless device 2 in FIG. 1, and location transmitter 110a, including the components of location transmitter 110 in FIG. 4, within a proximate transmitting area 590. In one implementation, the communication layer of the wireless devices 2a, b, c may allow for transmittal of identification information to all other
10 wireless devices 2 a, b, c and location transmitters 110a within the proximate area 590. For instance, in Bluetooth implementations, the communication layers of the wireless devices 2a, b, c and location transmitter 110a may continually transmit packets containing an Inquiry Access Code (IAC) to establish communication with any other wireless device 2a, b, c and location transmitter 110a within the proximate area 590 of the transmission. The wireless devices 2a, b,
15 c and location transmitter 110a receiving one of the packets may then respond to establish a connection communication with the transmitting wireless device 2a, b, c or location transmitter 110a transmitting the packets. Upon establishing a connection, the transmitting devices, e.g., wireless devices 2a, b, c and location transmitter 110a, may then transmit identification information to all other connected transmitting devices in the proximate area 590. Each
20 wireless device 2 a, b, c and location transmitter 110a receiving such identification information would then add the identification information to the proximate user list 588 in a measured position record 554 being generated. In the described implementation, the PIM database 22 may maintain measured position records 554 and filtered position records 60 for location transmitters 110 to allow calendars to be generated for location transmitters 110 providing
25 calendar information for the location associated with the location transmitter 110, e.g., the building, room, vehicle, etc.

The PIM server 24 could utilize the information of proximate users to gather location description 86 information for a position record 54. FIGs. 12 and 13 illustrate additional logic that the PIM server 24 would perform from the NO branch of block 310 in FIG. 6 to gather location description 586 information from proximate transmitting devices in the event that location description information could not be obtained from the user defined 56 and public 58 location records at blocks 306 and 310, respectively. Additionally, the PIM server 24 may gather location description information from proximate transmitting devices to supplement the information provided in the location records 56, 58 in the user records 52.

With respect to FIG. 12, control begins at block 600 from the NO branch of block 314 in FIG. 6 where the PIM server 24 begins to gather location description information for record i from proximate transmitting devices monitored by the PIM server 24, i.e., those transmitting devices for which user records 52 (FIG. 2) are maintained in the PIM database 22 (FIG. 1). If (at block 602) the proximate user list 588 for position record i 554 includes one or more transmitting device IDs, where such transmitting devices may comprise wireless devices 2a, b, c or location transmitters 110a, then the PIM server 24 performs a loop at blocks 604 through 618 for each transmitting device ID j in the proximate user list 588 of measured position record i 554. A transmitting device ID comprises a unique identifier of the transmitting device in the PIM database 22. Thus, all user records 20 for each user or transmitting device have a unique ID. Within this loop, at block 606, the PIM server 24 queries the filtered position records 60 in the user records 50 for ID j to determine if the date 580, time 582, and position coordinate 584 of measured position record i 554 falls within the date 100 and time 102 ranges and is geographically proximate to the geographic location 104 of one filtered position record 60 for device ID j . If (at block 608) one filtered position record 60 for ID j having a location description 86 value satisfies the query, then the location description 106 (FIG. 3d) for the qualifying filtered position record 60 for ID j is added (at block 610) to the location description field 586 of the measured position record i . If multiple filtered position records 60 for ID j satisfy the query, then, in certain implementations, only the first located

filtered position record 60 is used or multiple location descriptions from multiple qualifying filtered position records may be added to the location description for record *i*. From block 610, control proceeds (at block 612) back to block 314 in FIG. 6 to process the next measured position record *i*.

- 5 If (at block 608) no filtered position record 60 satisfies the query, then the PIM server 24 determines (at block 614) whether the user records 50 for ID *j* includes a measured position record 554 that has a position coordinate value 84 that is proximate to the position coordinate value 584 of position record *i*. If (at block 616) one measured position record 554 for ID *j* having a location description satisfies the query, then control proceeds to block 610 to
- 10 add the location description 586 for the position record 554 for ID *j* to the location description field 586 for record *i*. If (at block 616) the measured 554 and filtered 60 position records for ID *j* do not provide a location description, then control proceeds (at block 618) back to block 604 to consider the ID for a next proximate device in the proximate user list 588. If (at block 618) all the proximate IDs in the proximate user list 588 were queried without finding a location
- 15 description 586 or if (at block 602) the proximate user list 588 is empty, then control proceeds (at block 620) to block 630 in FIG. 13 to further search the PIM database 22 (Fig. 1) for other user records 50 (FIG. 2) that may supply a location description.

- Blocks 630 through 640 comprise a loop that the PIM server 24 performs for all user records in the PIM database 22 until a location description is found, in which case the loop is
- 20 exited. The PIM server 24 may exclude the user records for the IDs in the proximate user list 588 considered during execution of the logic of FIG. 12. For the user records 50 of the transmitting device having ID *k*, at block 632, the PIM server 22 performs the steps at blocks 606, 608, 614, and 616 in FIG. 12 to find a location description satisfying the query from the filtered 60 or measured 554 position records in the user records 50 for ID *k*. If (at block 634)
- 25 a location description was found, then the PIM server 24 adds (at block 636) the location description discovered in the user records 50 of ID *k* to the location description 586 field for record *i*. Once the location description field 586 of record *i* is updated or if (at block 64) no

location description is found in the user records 50 of any of the transmitting devices in the PIM database 22, then control proceeds (at block 638) to block 314 in FIG. 6 to consider the next measured position record *i* having an empty location description field 86.

With the logic of FIGs. 12 and 13, the PIM server 12 searches the user records of transmitting devices the wireless device 2 recorded as proximate in the proximate user list 588. By searching the filtered position records of proximate transmitting devices, the PIM server 12 is effectively checking the calendar data for the proximate transmitting devices to determine if such calendar data provides detailed location description information that would be useful to include in the measure position record 554 for the wireless device 2. As discussed, the filtered position records 60 are used to construct the calendar entries in a user calendar, shown as displayed in FIGs. 8 and 9a, b. If the filtered position records 60 do not supply location description information, then the measured position records 554, which comprise the underlying data behind the filtered position records 60, for proximate transmitting devices identified in the list 558 may be searched. In this way, the location description information in their user records 50 for one transmitting device can be supplemented with location description information gathered by other transmitting devices in the vicinity when the data for the measured position record 554 was generated.

Additionally, the PIM server 24 may also search the user defined 56 and public 58 location records for each user in the proximate user list 588 to determine if any of the location records 56 or 58 provides a geographic boundary 92 (FIG. 3c) proximate to the position coordinate 584 of record *i*. If such a location record 56 or 58 for the proximate transmitting device is identified, then the location description 94 with such location record 56 or 58 may be added to the location description field 586 of record *i*.

In further implementations, if the proximate transmitting devices provide multiple location descriptions, then the PIM server 24 may combine the location descriptions or may select the location description deemed to provide the most information. In this way, the entire

PIM database 22 is leveraged to provide robust location description information to the user records 50 to provide the most meaningful data to users of the system concerning their location.

Additional Implementation Details

5 The described aspects of the invention, including the logic described with respect to the PIM client and server and any other devices, may be implemented as a method, apparatus or article of manufacture using standard programming and/or engineering techniques to produce software, firmware, hardware, or any combination thereof. The term "article of manufacture" as used herein refers to code or logic implemented in hardware logic (e.g., an integrated circuit

10 chip, Field Programmable Gate Array (FPGA), Application Specific Integrated Circuit (ASIC), etc.) or a computer readable medium (e.g., magnetic storage medium (e.g., hard disk drives, floppy disks,, tape, etc.), optical storage (CD-ROMs, optical disks, etc.), volatile and non-volatile memory devices (e.g., EEPROMs, ROMs, PROMs, RAMs, DRAMs, SRAMs, firmware, programmable logic, etc.). Code in the computer readable medium is accessed and

15 executed by a processor. The code in which the invention is implemented may further be accessible through a transmission media or from a file server over a network. In such cases, the article of manufacture in which the code is implemented may comprise a transmission media, such as a network transmission line, wireless transmission media, signals propagating through space, radio waves, infrared signals, etc. Of course, those skilled in the art will recognize that

20 many modifications may be made to this configuration without departing from the scope of the present invention, and that the article of manufacture may comprise any information bearing medium known in the art.

 In the described implementations, the wireless device obtains the position coordinates and time and date information and transmits the data to the server 4. In alternative

25 implementations, telecommunication devices or towers can detect the location of the wireless device and transmit the data for the measured position record 54 directly to the server 4. In

such implementations, the wireless device would not be involved in transmitting position coordinates for the measured position records.

The described implementations concerned maintaining user location information with a user calendar program. The described implementations can further be used to provide and
5 utilize a persons geographic location and/or activities for a measured time period for any purpose, not just calendering. For instance, a company may want to track the location and activity of workers. The company can then filter and compare a workers actual location/activity with their work schedule. Such information would be particularly useful for manufacturers and others attempting to determine optimal human resource allocation in the
10 workplace.

The PIM location/activity information of the described implementations would also be very useful for companies that have to send workers out to field locations, such as cable companies, telephone companies, plumbers, etc., to track how the worker's actual location/activities correspond to those scheduled. In the case that real time worker
15 location/activity information is provided to the calendar display, then the company can track the workers schedule and their actual geographic location in real time. Moreover, because descriptive geographic information is provided, a quick review of the calendar information can provide useful information on the workers geographic location, such as their presence in a particular building. Moreover, to the extent location records define the geographic boundaries
20 of major roadways and freeways, a manager could review a field workers real time calendar, which could display that the worker is presently driving on a roadway. The activity algorithm can specify the rate the worker is traveling, i.e., indicating stuck in traffic, etc.

In the described implementations, scheduled events and location/activity information were displayed together in a user calendar view. Alternatively, the calendar view may
25 selectively display only scheduled events or location/activity information.

The described implementations presented the scheduled event and location/activity information at different times during a user specified time interval. However, the generated

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location/activity information may be presented in alternative formats. For instance, the user may generate a display of all locations visited and activities, and the time period during which the location was visited or activity performed would be displayed under the location/activity display.

5 FIGs. 3a, b, c, d illustrate one implementation of the data structures used to maintain the information used in the described implementations. However, those skilled in the art will recognize that there are numerous ways the data shown in FIGs. 3a, b, c, d may be organized in data structures and a database for storage and retrieval.

10 In the described implementations, the PIM server 24 transmitted the PIM information to the client PIM 20 or some other client to display in a browser, such as a WML or HTML browser. In alternative implementations, the PIM server 24 may provide the generated PIM information in alternative presentation and file formats, or alternative text markup languages than those described herein. Moreover, the location information presented to the user through the browser may present information in alternative presentation formats, such as audio, movies, etc.
15 For instance, the calendar may display a hypertext description of the visited location. User selection of the hypertext description could present a movie or audio file about the visited location.

20 Still further, the user, through the wireless device 2 or some other computer may provide images or audio files taken from a location to associate with measured position records. In certain implementations, the wireless device 2 could include a microphone, still image camera, video camera etc. The user could then associate such multi-media files image information with the location that the PIM client 20 would provide with the measured position records 54 sent to the PIM server 24. This information would be made available to those viewing the calendar providing the location/activity information.

25 In the described implementation, the generated location was expressed as an x, y, z position coordinate. However, as discussed, the position coordinate may be expressed as any

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The foregoing description of the preferred embodiments of the invention has been presented for the purposes of illustration and description. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise form disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. It is intended that the scope of the invention be limited not by this detailed description, but rather by the claims appended hereto. The above specification, examples and data provide a complete description of the manufacture and use of the composition of the invention. Since many embodiments of the invention can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, the invention resides in the claims hereinafter appended.

****Bluetooth is a trademark of Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson.**

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